RNA FOR A BETTER LIFE IN THE HEIGHTS

RIVERVIEW Neighborhood Association

JANUARY, 1991 *232 Ogden Avenue - Jersey City, N.J. 07307 - (201) 798-0493*

RNA IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY POLITICAL PARTY, ORGANIZATION OR ELECTED OFFICIAL

MEETING MINUTES

The December, 1990 RNA meeting was extremely brief. We discussed only one subject of concern - that being the approval by the Board of Adjustment for the continuation of the non-conforming use variance for 210 Ogden Avenue for the new stone and marble factory that has moved there.

Then our members eagerly adjourned the official portion of the meeting and commenced with our annual holiday bash. Several members took time to cook, bake, slice and mix a delightful array of foods and deserts for the rest of us to partake of. The Torres children came to the party to present all the members with homemade Christmas ornaments. It was a tremendous affair for all.

The January, 1991 meeting was cancelled because of the first snow storm of the new year. Over the years, since its inception, RNA has been involved in a number of "fights" and has come away a winner in the majority of cases. But how does a neighborhood group fight Mother Nature? Only six people braved the snow and hazardous conditions to attend the meeting. Yours truly was one of those brave souls, so I speak from first hand information, when I say "hats off" to Hank Cesare, Kathy Brennan, Bea Higgins, Valerie and Jack Rea - all staunch dedicated members of RNA.

Please make an effort to attend the next meeting on Friday, February 8th at 7:30 PM. We have a really full agenda and your participation is greatly appreciated. Most important is the opening of nominations for the annual election of RNA officers.

Maria Tuzzo, Secretary

HELP SUPPORT RNA

Don't forget to pay your annual membership dues for 1991. It only costs $3.00 a year to enjoy the benefits of joining Riverview Neighborhood Association. Official membership entitles people living within RNA's boundaries - voting privileges on all matters that are brought before the association at the monthly general meetings (the boundaries are Bowers Street on the north, Palisade Avenue on the west, Ogden Avenue on the east and Cuneo Place on the south).For people living outside the area, membership dues entitle them to receive the RNA monthly newsletter and attend the monthly meetings as active non-voting participants. In general, monies collected from the dues help defray the cost of mailing our monthly newsletter, pay for refreshments, stamps for correspondence and other important or unexpected expenses incurred in running our Association.

Make your check payable to Riverview Neighborhood Association and mail it to 232 Ogden Avenue, J.C., N.J. 07307. Be sure to include your return address so that your membership card can be sent to you. Better yet, bring it in person to our next meeting, Friday, February 8th at the Harbor View Health Care Center.

IS IT WORTH FIGHTING FOR?

Lately our neighborhood seems to be under continual attack from all corners. Whether it is from increased crime and drug dealing on Palisades Avenue between Franklin and Griffith Streets or on the closed Mountain Road,or from the City imposing a renovation plan onto Riverview Park which is not what the neighborhood wants or needs, or from the breaking of our residential zoning by the Board of Adjustment allowing a stone cutting factory to open up at 210 Ogden Avenue - all of these must be recognized as threats to our community and ultimately, against our way of life. Added to these local problems, are the city-wide issues of high taxes, possible police and firemen layoffs, the school takeover, traffic and parking

COMING EVENTS

1) **RNA MEETING:**

FRIDAY, February 8, at 7:30 PM

AT THE HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER

- Opening of nominations for the annual elections for RNA officers

- Neighborhood and Community Updates

problems, the dwindling waterfront development crisis, and inadequate public maintenance and security. Regionally, we are confronted with overwhelming environmental and transportation problems.Our state and nation are experiencing a terrible recession with unemployment, high taxes and deficits.

With all these threats to ourselves and our community, it is no wonder that we sometimes feel like just giving up and accepting the "inevitable". But it is just at moments of time like these, when we as a neighborhood group of neighbors and friends should think collectively and protect each other from the problems that confront us. It is the time when we should think creatively and suggest different options to solve some of our neighborhood, City, region and state problems. We may not always agree with what solution is best or which one we as a group should endorse, but that is not the point. The point is that we care enough about our block, our friends and our neighbors that we are ready and willing to discuss and argue and eventually compromise to adopt the best plan of action for what ever enterprise we undertake.

Is it worth fighting for? Riverview Neighborhood Association was formed over seven years ago by a group of people for the express purpose of preserving our neighborhood and also to improve the quality of our lives. There are many dedicated people that have helped build this organization through their contributions of talent, experience, time, love and patience. The Association is nothing without its members and friends - it is only as strong as they want it to be. The struggle to improve and protect our community never seems to end but hopefully the spirit and will of the people will always rise to the occasion and meet the challenge.

Vito Brunetti

HOLIDAY UPDATES

HARBOR VIEW HEALTH CARE CENTER XMAS PARTY:

The party at the Harbor View on December 7th, 1990 was a big success. I want to thank Ms. Barbara Kaddik, the Center's Administrator and Diane Deverjeois, the Recreation Supervisor and all their staff for their cooperation. I also want to thank the following for their work and contributions: Kathy Brennan, Gert Bogden, Rose Scalzo, Ruth Conrad, Marie Tresca, Bea Higgins, Dolly Quinton, Maria Tuzzo, Kay Grom, Marie Lannie, Frances Santoro, and Valerie Rea. A special thanks to Frank Frega , our pianist. The children of School # 8 under the guidance of their principal, Mr. Trefurt and their music teacher entertained the residents with Christmas songs.

We had special tables set aside for the children for refreshments and treats. The Torres family is to be thanked for their hard work for the handmade colorful sled ornaments which they passed out to all the residents. Maria Tuzzo did a great job with her singing. This year we also gave out two special gifts, one for a man and one for a woman.

Next year, let's try to make it an even better party with more volunteers. Words can hardly describe how good it makes you feel to see these senior residents so happy with tears of joy on their faces when they realize that someone really cares enough to spend an afternoon with them.

CHRISTMAS CAROLLING:

This year the Christmas carollers went around the neighborhood on December 22th. Although there were not many of us (due to a lot of colds and flu), the night of serenading our neighbors turned out very good. We gave it our best effort, although we missed some of our best "songbirds". It was a nice night and we picked up a few stray singers along the way. A lot of the homes were lit for the holidays, which made the street very festive. We were invited in for refreshments and treated very cordially by some of our friends. This gave us an opportunity to see the interior of these houses on Ogden Avenue. Hope to see more of you budding Carusos next year for a very enjoyable evening!

ATLANTIC CITY BUS TRIP:

Mother Nature shined down on us with favor on the day of our trip to Atlantic City. It was a beautiful day with the sun shining and a warm, gentle breeze. We had a raffle on the bus and several people were happy to win bottles of wine. A sing-a-long followed and soon we arrived at our destination.

While we didn't seem to have any big money winners, we all had a good time and got to know our neighbors a little better. Hope to see you on our next trip.

HOLIDAY FOOD AND TOY DRIVE:

The Salvation Army wants to thank you so much for your kind contribution to our Holiday effort for 1990.

Your contributions came in the form of food collected can by can and toys lovingly picked out with a needy boy or girl in mind. All this and more go into wrapping up our holiday season.

The Salvation Army just wants you to know that you are special to the people in our community.

Thank you for giving...thank you for sharing...thank you for being you! God bless you all during this holiday season and throughout the year.

UPDATE: 210 OGDEN AVENUE

As we go to print, the neighborhood is still upset about the situation at 210 Ogden Avenue. On November 29, 1990, the Board of Adjustment voted to allow the non-conforming use variance to be extended to the new stone cutting factory that has moved to this location. For the vote to be made legal, a written statement must be approved at the next meeting of the Board. On January 17th, the Board rejected the

applicant's written statement of the variance. Another version of the variance is going to be resubmitted on Thursday , January 31st for the Board's approval. Within forty-eight hours, this memorialized variance is printed in the Jersey Journal for public notice. From this point, anyone can appeal this decision within a period of forty-five days to the Superior Court of Hudson County.

The concerned neighbors are deciding which is the best way to appeal this variance and stop this factory from operating in our community. The threat of this industrial enterprise breaking the residential zoning of the community is very real. There are the problems with this specific factory: the large trucks delivering supplies and obstructing the street and sidewalk, and their trucks and vans illegally parked not only in front of other property but actually parked on someone's private driveway. The more dangerous fear is that this industrial variance can be used as a wedge, by other ambitious developers or businesses, to break the R-2 residential zoning limits and build large projects. The end result could be a destruction of our quiet, residential neighborhood.

As stated above, there is a 45 day period to appeal this variance and stop this project before it goes any further. There will be discussion about this issue at the next meeting On February 8th.

UPDATE: N. J. TRANSIT WATERFRONT TRANSPORTATION PROJECT

(The following statement was given by COATS, a coalition of environmental and advocacy groups, on January 24th, at a public meeting to hear testimony about the N J T's plan for an interim busway on the waterfront. Phyllis R. Elston made the presentation.)

COATS, or the Committee on Alternative Transportation Solutions, is a coalition of organizations and individuals working to achieve efficient, economic and non-polluting public transportation for the Hudson Waterfront area. COATS supports light rail as the transportation mode of choice for the area. We request that N J Transit consider the use of available Federal funding for a permanent transit solution. We feel construction of a busway will make any future improvements more expensive, since future projects would have to be built under, around, or over an existing busway.

We consider the Hudson Waterfront to be one of our State's most valuable economic resources. We understand the need for development to occur in this region in concert with environmental protection. In city after city across our nation, it has been proven that development flourishes around light rail systems, bringing economic improvement without impairing public health. When was the last time anyone experienced quality development rushing to locate near a bus terminal?

Our views and opinions are supported by research and cost data. Our views and opinions are shared by thousands of Hudson county citizens who have demonstrated this by signing petitions in favor of consideration of a non-polluting transit system. Our views and opinions have been supported by your local Assembly representatives and Mayors. Our view and opinions are shared by the N. J. Sierra Club, the N. J. Association of Railroad Passengers, the Pollution Crisis Coalition, the Transit Committee of Bergen County, the Waterfront Coalition of Hudson and Bergen Counties, WatersEdge Light Rail, the North Hudson Council of Mayors, the Township of Weehawken, the Borough of Edgewater, the Environmental Commission of Bayonne and many others too numerous to mention. Our views and opinions represent a strong expression of the Public Will.

Shortsighted spending on outmoded solutions does not serve the Public Good. Diesel engine particulate matter is not currently monitored in Hudson County. There exists no barometer to indicate degradation of air quality - pollution now already exceeds the mandates of the Federal Clean Air Act. Federal funds which should be forthcoming to New Jersey in the future can be jeopardized by a busway. New Jersey is mandated by the Clean Air Act to show that it is working to meet standards, not that it is "priming the pump" to squirt additional pollution into our neighborhoods.

The fact that proper environmental validation of a transit system may not be required is a poor reason for us not do do our homework on a long-term public health and economic consequences of a wasteful interim project.

We request consideration of wise planning, efficient spending of taxpayers' money, encouragement of economic growth in concert with environmental protection. In short, we request reconsideration of the wisdom of the Waterfront Office's proposal for a interim busway.

UPDATE: RIVERVIEW PARK RENOVATIONS

(The following letter was sent by the Hamilton Park Neighborhood Association to Mayor Gerald McCann regarding the renovation plans for Riverview Park. It was written by Clare Ryan Sirois, a former resident and member of RNA.)

The Hamilton Park Neighborhood Association is concerned by the lack of respect paid by the city to the citizens of the Riverview neighborhood concerning the renovation of the Park at the center of their community. The Riverview neighborhood residents should have been encouraged to share their ideas and suggestions for the future of the Park from the start. It is a shame on Jersey city that they have been made to feel that they have no voice. Including neighborhood input from the beginning and throughout the design process seems to us to be the proper method of handling such quality of life decisions.

As a neighborhood association we often focus on Hamilton park because it enriches our lives. We enjoy it and work hard to improve its facilities and appearance. We appreciate the support the city has given us, e.g., the bulbs contributed by the Incinerator Authority.

The Hamilton Park Neighborhood Association would like to inform you now that we expect to be able to work with the city when the time comes to spend money on Hamilton Park. We expect our considerations and needs to be taken into account by any professional architects or designers hired to undertake the Park renovation project. we would appreciate a response which specifically states your policy and intentions in this matter.

(RNA would like to thank the Hamilton Park residents for their support and efforts on our behalf. Although the City architects did approach our association for suggestions and input, the final plan was not what the neighborhood wants or more importantly what the community actually needs. At this point, Council President Roman has intervened to help work out some of the continuing issues. The major problem that is unresolved is the plans for a large playground in the northern end of the Park. Ms. Roman has promised to gather additional community input before deciding what to do with this playground.)

CONRAD'S CORNER

Colonel McCabe, of the Army Corps of Engineers, was all wet when he said during a flood or hurricane water could pour through the opening in the 28 million dollar nine foot high seawall of Liberty State Park causing flooding which could spread toxins and cause millions of dollars in damage to the Park. (Jersey Journal article: "Ellis Bridge would allow park floods": 12/19/90)

If water high enough could pour through this hole it would also flood the entire southern section of the Park without a seawall and at the same time flood Exchange Place and come pouring down into the Path Station, which incidentally has no seawall. Supposing Liberty State Park does become flooded once every hundred years - does that mean we had to spend 28 million dollars to prevent it from happening since it would all be dried up after the first low tide for the next hundred years.

Colonel McCabe was able to con environmentalists into thinking Liberty State Park could be washed away without the seawall and was able to get funding over many objections for this colossal junket of destroying the beautiful sandy beach of the Park and replacing it with a mile and one half walkway of what some observers have now been calling a concrete highway. Spoiling the natural beach with its sandy shore for 28 million dollars has caused all the financial woes of Liberty State Park. Its maintenance and supervision will be another costly item to police. Caven Point has been doing very well all these years without a seawall and has never been flooded...

Before it becomes more expensive to prevent muggings how about tearing it down and putting back the sandy beach and leave the bridge to Ellis Island alone for the residents of Hudson County, who have such high taxes, they can't afford the six dollars boat trip to the Island. If the seawalk is going to cost still more State money to maintain, get rid of it and put back the beach again, like Caven Point with its small waves breaking along the shore and just costing the taxpayers a minimal amount to maintain.

The concrete seawall can be broken up to make fill for a causeway to Ellis Island and another to the Statute of Liberty as proposed in 1962. Have the Federal Government take over the Park as part of the National Gateway Park System as originally intended and save the State of New Jersey millions to complete and maintain the Park. The Gateway Park System run by the National Government has never gotten itself into a deficit like Liberty State Park which is run by our State bureaucrats.

EXCERPTS FROM OTHER COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS:

JOURNAL SQUARE NEWSLETTER (published by Councilman Joe Rakowski of Ward C):

a) Teen Nation: Judge Gallipoli ruled in September that this teen disco must go before the J.C. Planning Board for site plan approval. The owners of Teen Nation have not formally submitted their plan. Thanks to the citizens of St. Joseph's, Hilltop and other concerned constituents, they were all a big help in stopping this disco from opening.

b) Crime: This councilman, Hilltop Association and St Joseph's Parish sponsored a victims of Crime Town Meeting on December 10, 1990. Over 200 people attended along with Mayor McCann, Police Director McCarthy, Assemblyman Impreveduto, Hudson County Prosecutor DePascale and Councilman-at-Large Efrain Rosario. The 15 proposals were submitted to the above individuals including any juvenile convicted of a people crime would lose their drinking privileges until the age of 21, mandatory teaching of values in the school, manual labor for criminals committing people crime and an anti-loitering bill as part of the state criminal code. I also will sponsor similar meetings periodically during the year.

c) HEAT COMPLAINT LINE: If you are a tenant and you are without adequate heat, you should contact the Division of Property Conservation at 547-4824. That is the same number to call if there are code violations in your apartment.

d) Consumer Protection: If you have any complaints regarding faulty service or products purchased, call Barbara Donnelly, director of Hudson county Consumer Protection at 795-6295.

NEWS FOR OUR NEIGHBORS FROM CHRIST HOSPITAL:

a) Child Care Center Update: The Christ Hospital Child Care Center has begun its third month of operation, and things are progressing well. To date, 54 children are enrolled in the Center, more than a third of them from our immediate neighborhood.

b) "Look Good...Feel Better": This program is designed to help women undergoing chemotherapy and radiation therapy cope with the unpleasant side effects of their treatments. For information, call the Public Relations Department at 795-8358.

c) Medical Information Available: Residents of Hudson County and the surrounding communities who need health-related information can call the Center for Health Awareness at 795-8030, Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Staffed by three full-time registered nurses, this department offers a variety of health education programs, health screenings and support groups to area residents. The support groups include: Parents-Youth Diabetes Group, Cardiac Support group, Cancer Adjustment Group, Alzheimer's Group and the Diabetes Group.

OFFICE OF ADVOCACY FOR THE HANDICAPPED BULLETIN:

Enforcing handicapped parking violations is a major concern for people with disabilities in New Jersey. Reserved handicapped parking areas provide safety and convenience for mobility impaired persons. When enforcement is low, so is the effectiveness of the safety standards protecting people with disabilities.

Wheelchair users who are forced in unreserved spaces are subject to hazardous traffic conditions. Traveling safely through a busy parking area in a wheelchair is very difficult. Most wheelchairs are low to the ground and are not easily visible to vehicle operators backing out of parking spaces or moving through parking areas. This is a dangerous situation and could cause a serious accident.

Persons who use assistance devices such as walkers, crutches along with other persons with mobility impairments like lung and heart conditions are also unnecessarily subjected to unsafe conditions when there are no available handicapped parking spaces because these spaces are occupied by illegally parked cars.

With these situations in mind, we offer a free booklet "N.J. Handicapped Parking Laws" by contacting our office at 547-6875.

SEE YOU AT OUR NEXT RNA MEETING ON FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8TH, AT 7:30 P.M.

FEBRUARY.....

THE MONTH OF CHERUBS, HEARTS, LOVERS, SWEETHEARTS, CANDY, FLOWERS, ST. VALENTINE'S DAY, ASH WEDNESDAY.....AND SPRING JUST AROUND THE CORNER.

VALENTINE'S DAY IS THE SECOND BIGGEST FLORIST HOLIDAY.

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY TO EVERYONE AND ESPECIALLY LOVERS.

Madeline Tuzzo Rea

IN MEMORY OF TED FLACH

Ted Flach passed away on January 21st. He was a longtime community organizer and activist in the Heights section of Jersey City. He was a member of the child review board of the Division of Youth and Family Services, board of directors for Head Start Child Development, one of the founders and treasurer of the Heights Interfaith Council, a member of the Community Development Block Grant Board, president of the Community Relations Board of the North District, and member of the Friends of Music, Jersey City.

He was one of the truly dedicated community workers in this City and he will be greatly missed. His experience, patience and leadership have helped guide the Heights for many years. He was an example of what a person can do who wants to help others and improve their community.

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IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN ADVERTISING IN THE RNA NEWSLETTER, PLEASE MAIL (2) OF YOUR BUSINESS CARDS AND A CHECK [EITHER $10/ONE MONTH OR $60/NINE MONTHS] TO RNA, 232 OGDEN AVENUE, JERSEY CITY, N.J. 07307.

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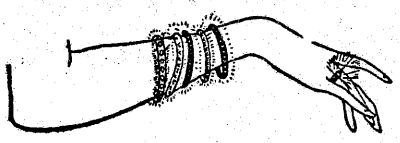

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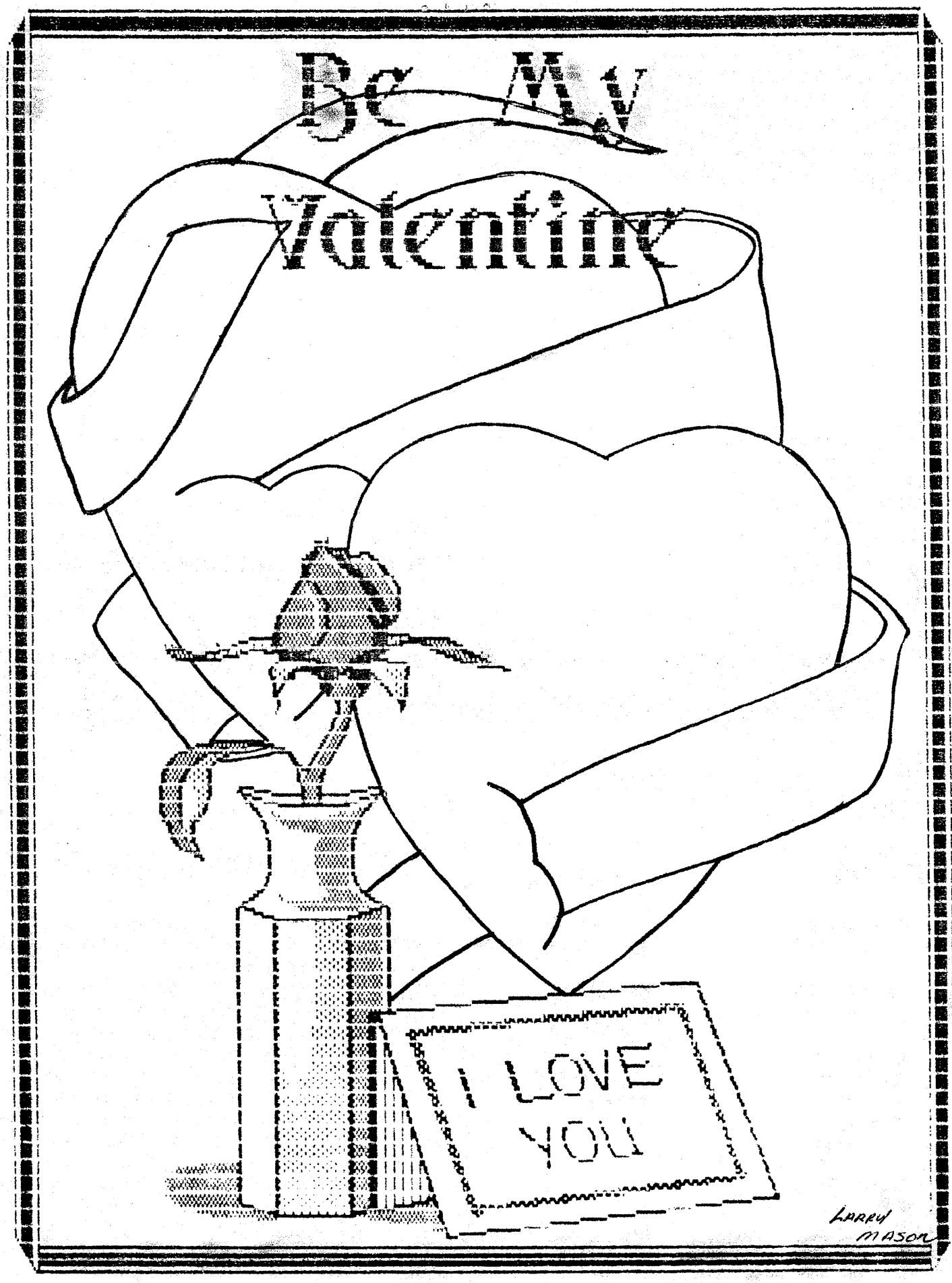
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NEWSLETTER
Kathy Brennan

PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT
Hank Cesari

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Ann Hart

ANNUAL RNA ELECTIONS

The Annual Election of RNA officers will be held in March this year. The cancellation of the January meeting set back the opening of the nominations.

Nominations are for the offices of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Sargent-at-Arms. They will be accepted during the regular meeting on Friday, February 8th. Nominations will be closed and the elections will be held at the following meeting on Friday, March 8th.

Please make every effort to attend the meetings and participate in our electoral process. Any official member who lives within in the boundaries of the organization can run for office or nominate another person.

Your chance to make a difference in your neighborhood and ultimately your city starts here at the RNA.

Please note - Only those members who have paid their annual dues ($3.00) for 1991 may hold office or vote in the March election.